

CMS NEWS

Middle School Dance

The Commerce Middle School will once again be treated to a dance on February 13, from 7:30 until 10 p.m. This dance will be sponsored by our TSA and will be chaperoned by both staff and parents. Chris Byler will once again facilitate.



Our last dance held on December 16. We had over one-hundred and fifty students and guests attend. We were introduced to Chris

Byler, a youth counselor, from Carthage who had offered to DJ for us as well as operate his music and lights. His show was fantastic, and the students went wild. We hope this dance exceeds our December dance.



8th Grade Testing

The eighth grade will once again be taking their State Writing Test this month on the 25th. They are very excited, but extremely nervous. Most of the students say they are prepared and would just as soon get it over. However, as always, there are a few who wish we had more time to prepare.

EVENTS

FEBRUARY

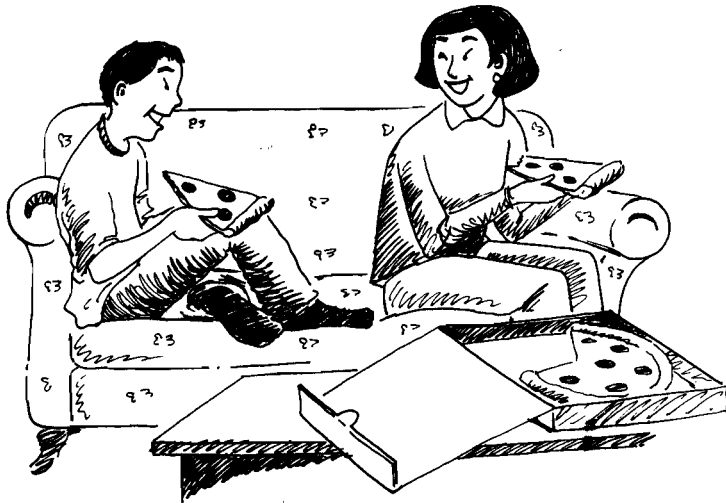
- 02 Progress Reports Go Out
- 04 - 6 8th Basketball Tournament
Wyandotte
- 05 Parent Conferences 3:30 - 6:30
- 06 Parent Conferences 8:30 - 11:30
- 07 TSA to Claremore
- 09 Board Meeting
- 11 6th Basketball Wyandotte (H)
8th basketball Wyandotte (H)
- 13 Professional Development
MS Dance 7:30 - 10 p.m.
- 24 NEO Tech. Festival
- 25 8th Grade Writing Test
- 28 Shanna Miller Fund Raiser



MARCH

- 06 End of 3rd Quarter
- 09 Start of 4th Quarter
- 12 Grade Cards Out
8th Grade Girls Day
- 24 Spring Pictures
- 31 TSA State Leadership Conf.



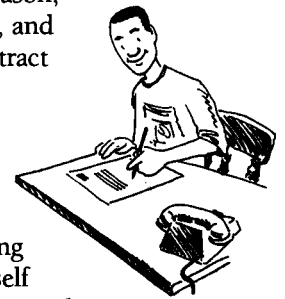


Whenever you want to ask questions about your middle grader's life, try to remain as casual as possible. If your questions are too probing, she's likely to feel attacked, which may make her respond defensively.

Argumentative

"Why do I have to do my homework before I can talk on the phone? I think that's so dumb."

If your middle grader always takes the opposite side of your opinion, don't get too upset. At this age, disagreeing is a way for your child to try out her growing brainpower. Her mind has begun to reason, make decisions, and understand abstract ideas.



Disagreeing is a great way for her to think out loud. She's trying to separate herself from you and prove she can do things her own way.

Suggestions: Try to remember that no matter what you say, chances are your middle grader will hold an opinion different from yours. She is learning to defend her argument—a valuable skill she'll need to resist peer pressure. Likewise, she's trying to sort out what she likes and dislikes, from hairstyles to values. It's also a way for her to learn the thinking behind your rules. She's testing you to see why you hold certain beliefs.

However, it's important that your child remain respectful when expressing her views. Explain that just because she disagrees with an idea doesn't mean she has to respond rudely.

Editor's Note: Even though the middle years can be tough, try not to throw your arms up in despair. Research shows that middle graders need their parents' guidance now more than ever.

Sensitive

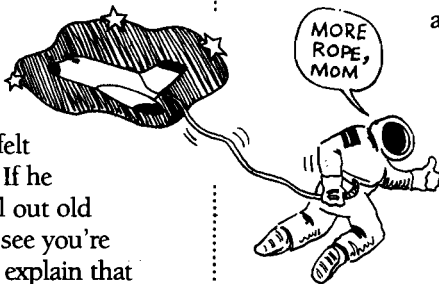
"I don't want anyone at the restaurant to see me. I hate the way I look."

As middle graders mature, their bodies start changing in uncontrollable ways. Examples: acne, growth spurts, facial hair. This often makes them feel awkward about their appearance.

Suggestions: When your child makes negative comments about his appearance, listen to what he says. Try to avoid immediately reassuring him. Instead, make comments that prompt him to describe his feelings. Example: "That must be really tough." This encourages him to open up about his emotions.

Make your comments in a matter-of-fact tone. Middle graders are likely to find joking and teasing hurtful, even if you're just trying to be funny.

Talk about how you felt when you were his age. If he doesn't believe you, pull out old photos. He will quickly see you're telling the truth. Gently explain that his friends probably feel the same way about their bodies. Let him know that these changes will be less and less noticeable as he gets older.



Independent

Your middle grader seems unhappy, so you ask her what's wrong. "Nothing," she replies. Then, she spends an hour on the phone telling a friend about her troubles.

As a parent, this may feel like rejection. For the first years of her life, your child relied on you to help her fix what was bothering her. Now she turns to friends for help.

Although you may feel like you've done something wrong, middle graders naturally begin to form relationships outside the family. It's part of growing up—depending less on parents to meet all their needs.

Suggestions: The key to this stage of your child's life is to allow her to make more decisions about how and when she does things. But make it clear that her newfound freedom has conditions. For example, so long as her work gets done, you'll try to stay out of her hair.

But if she stops meeting her obligations, remind her that you'll step in and take over.

Middle Years